

REMARKS

Favorable consideration of this application, as presently amended, is respectfully requested.

The present preliminary amendment is submitted to place the above-identified application in more proper format under United States practice.

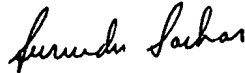
By the present preliminary amendment, Claims 1-14 are cancelled and new Claims 15-28 are presented for examination. New Claims 15-28 are believed to be self-evident from the original disclosure, including original Claims 1-15, and thus are not deemed to raise any issues of new matter.

A new Abstract is also submitted herein.

The present application is believed to be in condition for a full and thorough examination on the merits. An early and favorable consideration of the present application is hereby respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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12-21-01

IN THE CLAIMS

--Claims 1-14 (Cancelled).

Claims 15-28 (New).--

IN THE ABSTRACT

--Abstract (New).--